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OPEDA

Organization of Professional Employees
of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

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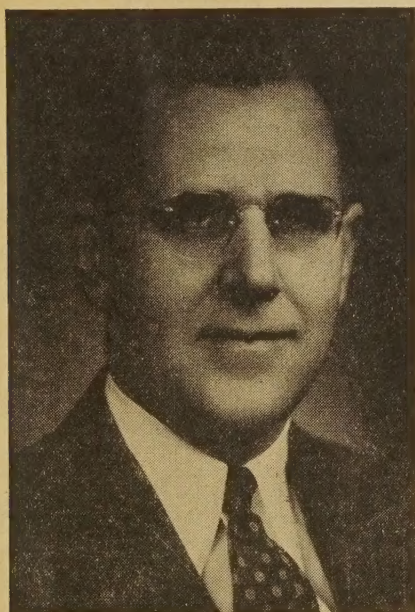
MAY 10 1949

OPEDA'S GUIDES AND COUNCILORS FOR '49

Melvin C. Merrill and George A. Collier were adamant in their positions that new personalities in the offices of president and vice-president would contribute to OPEDA's progress and prestige; Walworth Brown felt that, after three years, OPEDA's finances could be managed by some one else; and certain council and executive committee members modestly contended that new incumbents of their positions on those bodies would be all

to the good. These views met with wide dissent but reluctant acceptance. Nominees for positions on the council were selected by OPEDA members of the various bureaus, mainly through nominating committees, and elections to the council were by majority votes in each bureau. Nominees for the positions of president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer and six of the memberships of the executive committee were selected by a nominating committee consisting of Fred W.

Poos, E&PQ, chairman; Harry C. Diener, SCS; Ada L. Smith, BAI; Robert H. Black, PMA; Marvin E. Fowler, PISAE; Joseph C. Wheeler, BAE; and Raymond M. Wirka, FS. At the council meeting of January 18, 1949, ballots were collected, tabulated and announced by a committee consisting of A. Rex Johnson, FAR; Louise O. Beraw, LIB, and Agnes E. Meier, OPEDA. As a result, OPEDA's officers, executive committee, and council for 1949 will be as follows:



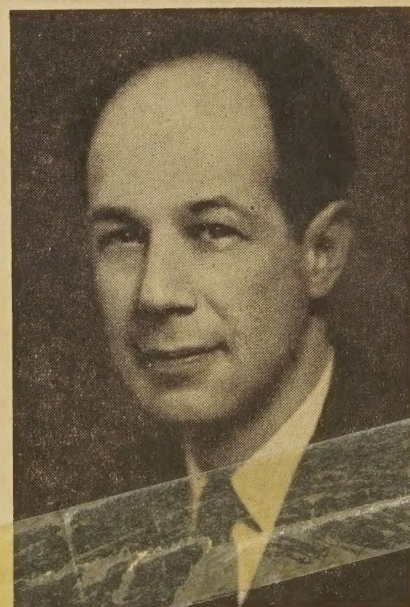
VICE-PRESIDENT
ERWIN C. ELTING

Mr. Elting, now Associate Chief, Office of Experiment Stations, initially joined that organization in 1936, as dairy husbandman. Moving onward and upward through a series of positions of increasing importance, he eventually became experiment station administrator in the O.E.S. field of animal husbandry; then Assistant Chief in August 1946 and Associate Chief in November 1947. A native of Missouri, he spent his boyhood in Carthage. The University of Missouri gave him his Bachelor's Degree in agriculture in 1923, and his Master's Degree in 1925. From 1925 to 1929 he was engaged in teaching and research at the University of Missouri; and from 1929 to 1936 he was on the staff of South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station.



PRESIDENT
BENNET A. PORTER

Dr. B. A. Porter is an old-timer in Agriculture. Among his immediate official associates and friends he is familiarly known as "Ben." He was born in Northampton, Mass., July 12, 1892, and spent his boyhood days in the Connecticut Valley. After receiving his training at the Massachusetts Agricultural College (now the University of Massachusetts) he entered the Department of Agriculture in 1917 and has been engaged in fruit insect work ever since. He first spent about 12 years in the field—at Wallingford, Conn., and Vincennes, Ind. Late in 1928 he was transferred to Washington, and served over 16 years as Assistant Leader of the Division of Fruit Insect Investigation, BEPQ. Since 1945 he has been head of that division.



SECRETARY-TREASURER
WALWORTH BROWN

A Marylander by birth, and almost a member of the Department of Agriculture by birth since his father at one time was chief of a division in the old Bureau of Soils, Mr. Brown graduated from Princeton University in 1932 and entered the Department in 1936 in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. After two years of service in Chicago and a year with Crop Estimates Service in Springfield, Ill., he transferred to Washington to the accounts office of the bureau. With the formation of the Agricultural Marketing Service, Mr. Brown was assigned to A.M.S. where he was employed first in the accounts office and later in the budget office. In 1941 he transferred to the Office of Experiment Stations where his present position is that of administrative officer.

At the instance of the officers, and with the approval and concurrence of the executive committee, L. F. Kneipp will continue as Executive Officer of OPEDA during the year 1949.

GREETINGS FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

Election to the Presidency of OPEDA is a real honor, but it also carries with it serious responsibilities. I hope that the organization may continue to represent and promote effectively the best interests of the professional workers of the department. It will be hard to measure up to the high standards set by recent Presidents, but I'll do the best I can. OPEDA is fortunate in having in its membership many able men and women who are willing to give time and effort to the work of the organization. We are fortunate, too, in having the benefit of the wise counsel and efficient services of the Executive Officer, Mr. Lee F. Kneipp. Because of these favorable factors, we have every reason to look forward to a successful year.

BENNET A. PORTER.

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 1949

Mildred C. Benton, LIB.
Chief, Div. Field Library Services.
George A. Collier, PMA
Chief, Market News and Services;
Grain Branch.
C. O. Henderson, PERS.
Chief, Adm. Sup. Training Sec.
Div. of Training.

Eugene A. Hollowell, PISAE.
Sr. Agronomist on Clovers;
Div. Forage Crops and Diseases.
Harry Irion, FS.
Administrative Assistant.
Norris A. Olmstead, BAI.
Head, Budget and Fiscal Div.

Ex officio: Dr. M. C. Merrill, INF.
Chief, Div. of Publications.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1949

Agric. Economics.
Robert C. Tetro
B. Ralph Stauber
John L. Wilson
Harald C. Larsen*

Agric. and Ind. Chemistry.
G. W. Irving, Jr.
S. B. Detwiler, Jr.
S. J. Adams*

Animal Industry.
Thomas H. Bartilson
E. A. Eichhorn
Carl G. Potts
C. H. Pals*

Commodity Exchange Ath.
Douglas B. Bagnell
James Coker*

Ent. and Plant Quarantine.
Horace S. Dean
H. L. Haller
Fred W. Poos
Charles A. Weigle*

Experiment Stations.
Edward M. McGovran
Theresa Powell*

Extension Service.
Lawrence M. Vaughan
Madge Reese*

Farm Credit Admin'n.
James L. Robinson†
Franklin D. Van Sant†

Food and Drug Admin'n.
R. A. Osborn
G. R. Clark*

Foreign Agric. Relations.
Horace V. Geib
Mary E. Long*

Forest Service.
William R. Chapline
Perkins Coville
Howard Hopkins
Warren T. Murphy*

Information.
Elwood R. McIntyre
Wynne Johnson*

Library.
Margaret C. Schindler
Roberta C. Watrous*

PISAE.
Marvin E. Fowler
Victor F. Tapke
Edward E. Clayton*

Prod. and Mar. Admin'n.
Robert H. Black
George E. Gaus
Raymond R. Pailthorp
Charles N. Mason*

Rural Elec. Admin'n.
J. K. O'Shaughnessy
Everett C. Weitzell*

Soil Conservation Ser.
Harry C. Diener
T. Lee Gaston
Frank J. Hopkins
Lewis A. Jones*

* Indicates alternate.

† Nonvoting until eligibility formally established under Art. IV of constitution.

OPEDA'S NEW STANDING COMMITTEES

As in the Congress, and in most other public and private bodies, the real work of an organization largely is done in its committees. They are the parts of the organization that patiently assemble, evaluate and correlate the facts, ascertain and appraise the circumstances, weigh and analyze the pros and cons, seek out precedents and proved practices, explore the impingements of related agencies and programs and thus reduce nebulous concepts to coherent and ponderable courses of action.

Good committees can keep an organization on its toes, inspire it with new goals and ambitions, provide it with new ideals, wider horizons, more adequate bases of progress and accomplishment. OPEDA's standing committees are both its foundation and its motivation.

Committees should be so constituted, and their fields of action so defined, as to enable them most effectively to advance or attain the objectives of their parent body. Redefinition of the fields of OPEDA's

standing committees has been governed by that principle. The result is twofold; not only does it define the responsibilities of each committee but it also collectively outlines the specific ends toward which the organization is directing its efforts.

In essence the basic objectives of OPEDA can readily be grouped into four associations of elements, standards, or criteria; those of each group having a logical relationship to each other. In effect, these groups are as follows:

Economic Criteria

Adequacy to current conditions of:

- Rates of pay:
- Per diem allowances in lieu of travel costs.
- Mileage rates allowed for use of private car in official work.
- Reimbursement of costs incident to transfer of official station.

Safeguarding of future economic security through:

- Allowance and accumulation of annual leave.
- Allowance and accumulation of sick leave.
- Retirement annuities commensurate with reasonable living standards.
- Adequate provision of income during periods of partial or total disability.

Public Service Criteria

- Sufficiency, courtesy and impartiality of service to all citizens.
- Provision of technical information in adequate and understandable forms.
- Recognition of all valid public needs in development of plans and programs.
- Fully effective and economical use of personnel, equipment and supplies.
- Avoidance of functional duplication, overlapping and conflict.
- Prompt adoption and wide application of all practicable economies of administration.
- A code of ethics definitely expressive of these public obligations.

Professional Criteria

Establishment of and adherence to truly professional standards.
Optimum opportunity for educational progress along professional lines.
As an official activity. As a personal privilege.
Assignment affording optimum diversity of experience and scientific research.
Functional. Geographic. Economic.
Classification truly expressive of real professional capabilities.
Efficiency ratings truly and minutely expressive of real accomplishment.
Personal credit for personal accomplishment.
Adequate recognition of seniority and effective service.
Promotions to positions of greater responsibility as rapidly as deserved.
Demotion or separation only where failure or default is well established.

Committees for each of the four preceding groupings are now in course of organization. Attainment of the widest practicable familiarity with the whole range of problems with which OPEDA members must deal is desirable, hence the personnel of the committees should be drawn from the maximum number of bureaus and agencies with OPEDA membership, and from the widest practicable range of classification grades. Since official and personal circumstances sometimes obviate committee service, acceptability of nomination must first be determined. In

consequence the full membership of the four committees is not yet ready for announcement.

However, the four persons deemed by the executive committee as admirably suited to head the four standing committees have signified their willingness to so function. They are: Committee on Economic Criteria, John G. Sutton, SCS; Committee on Professional Criteria, Dean H. Cochran, FS; Committee on Working Criteria, John H. Scoltock, REA; and Committee on Public Service Criteria, Florence L. Hall, Extension Service. The four chairmen personally will participate in the recruitment of the other members of their committees. The gen-

Working Criteria

Adequacy of facilities requisite to satisfactory performance of assigned duties.
Research Offices Reference Sources Laboratories
Equipment Supplies
Constructive and qualified leadership, direction, and supervision.
Aides or assistants who are fully competent and qualified.
Unmistakable definitions of purposes towards which assigned duties are directed.
Clarity of specifications and instructions.
Supervisory acceptance of responsibility for supervisory decisions.
Optimum working periods and hours.
Equitable compensation for necessary overtime work.
Recognition of personal domestic circumstances when geographic assignments made.

eral idea is to have each committee a blend of the caution of maturity and the fervor of younger groups eager to explore new realms of thought and action.

Memberships of seven or nine persons for each committee are favored; so that two or more subcommittees, of perhaps three members each, can undertake specific missions on behalf of the whole committee. Also favored is the principle of field subcommittees in territories where regional chapters have been organized; where, as auxiliaries of the parent committee, subcommittees selected by their chapter can conduct those phases of a study which relate to the area within the jurisdiction of the chapter.

Instead of continuing the Committee on Legislation, the decision was that its functions of developing legislative programs, procedure and strategy hereafter will rest in a board comprised of the four officers of OPEDA and the chairmen of the

four committees above described. To provide that board with the requisite legal and legislative information and experience, Mr. Harry Irion of the Forest Service has been named and agreed to act as its legislative advisor.

The Committee on Other Departments meets the need it was created to meet, and its three members appear willing to continue their duties, consequently it has been continued unchanged in function or membership.

1949 LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

Approved by Council at meeting of January 18, 1949.

Increased salaries for secretaries, under secretaries and assistant secretaries of executive departments; and heads, associate heads and assistant heads of major agencies and establishments; as a step toward abandonment of outmoded \$10,000 salary ceiling.

Revision of Classification Act so as to eliminate accumulated discrepancies and inequities and establish a soundly related pattern of grades and salaries, with concomitant minor increases in salary rates. No aggressive advocacy by OPEDA of any general salary increase of major proportions, unless or until the cost of living index becomes higher than in 1948.

Increase in maximum per diem allowance in lieu of subsistence to \$10

in the continental United States and \$11 elsewhere.

Increase in maximum monthly allowance in cases of partial or total disability incurred in the performance of official work, from present limit of \$116.67 to a new limit of \$225 per month.

No reduction of present allowance of 26 days annual leave and 15 days sick leave per year for members of classified service; but no advocacy of any increase in the present maximum number of days accrued leave that may be carried over into the ensuing year.

Legislation to amend retirement law so that persons under federal appointment during the 5 or more years immediately preceding their retirement, but who prior to federal appointment were exclusively or primarily engaged under state appointment in projects conducted coopera-

tively between the federal government and the state, would be authorized to include such years of service in the computation of retirement annuities, to be supported by OPEDA in all practicable ways; provided that OPEDA's Executive Committee finds that such legislation adequately embodies the limitations deemed requisite to preservation of the integrity of the retirement program.

Proposals to increase the maximum mileage rate to be allowed for privately owned vehicles used for official purposes will be referred to the Committee on Economic Criteria.

Decision as to whether OPEDA should or should not oppose methods or systems of efficiency ratings which fail to record in adequate detail the true measure and value of services rendered, will depend on the findings of the Committee on Professional Criteria to which subject has been referred.

CODE OF ETHICS

For many years back, OPEDA's programs or statements of objectives have emphasized the need for a code of ethics to guide its members in the conduct of their professional activities. The need is half expressed, half implied, in numerous recent letters from OPEDA members, who seem to feel that earlier ideals and traditions of service have suffered from the attrition of recent circumstances and should be restated and reaffirmed. As chairman of the Committee on Professional Standards and Compensations, Mildred C. Benton not only assumed but very effectively redeemed the responsibility of reducing the code to concise form. Numerous ideas and suggestions were considered, test drafts were circulated for comment and criticism, every word was given the acid test of committee discussion. The code drafted by the committee was approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting of January 6; and it was ratified and adopted by the Council at its meeting of January 18. Here it is:

1. Honor, always, these basic obligations:
To the American people: courteous, impartial and efficient service.
To the Government: complete loyalty, full faith, devoted service.
To Management: understanding, support, cooperation.
To Associates and Co-workers: fairness, frankness, courtesy, opportunity, recognition, freedom of expression, moral support.
2. Maintain high standards of integrity in both personal and public relationships.
3. Encourage free expression of views of executive or legislative proposals or decisions in matters of public policy limited only by recognition of the appropriateness of clearly identifying wholly personal opinions having no official status.
4. Accept justifiable criticism and criticize only constructively.
5. Be alert to progressive practices and techniques.
6. Keep informed of new developments and promote them through reading, study, writing and activity in professional societies and other organizations through which this can be accomplished.
7. Subordinate personal ambitions or desires to the performance of official duties.

Executive Officer's Report—January, 1949

Kneipp Letter No. 5

● **THE NEW CONGRESS:** According to report there are 118 new members in the House of Representatives and 18 in the Senate. In consequence marked changes have occurred in the composition of committees and of committee staffs. That has been true particularly in the three committees in each House which handle most of the legislative proposals with which OPEDA is concerned.

These committees are the Senate and House Committees on Post Office and Civil Service; the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare and the House Committee on Education and Labor; and the Senate and House Committees on Expenditures in the Executive Departments. During the past year members of OPEDA have manifested considerable curiosity as to the particular Senators or Representatives who comprise these committees. The memberships of those committees in the 81st Congress are as follows:

Post Office and Civil Service

Senate—Johnston (chm.), McKellar, O'Connor, Broughton, Long, Neely, Frear, Langer, Flanders, Baldwin, Thye, Ecton, Hendrickson.

House—Murray (Tenn.) (chm.), Morrison, Miller (Calif.), Davis (Ga.), Williams, Whitaker, Crook, Karst, Thornberry, Buckley, Carlyle, McCarthy, Herlong, Gorski, Rhodes, Rees, Hagen, Corbett, St. George, Sadlak, Jenison, Burdick, Withrow, Gross, Golden.

Labor and Public Welfare Education and Labor

Senate—Thomas (Utah) (chm.), Murray, Pepper, Hill (Ala.), Neely, Douglas, Humphrey, Taft, Aiken, Smith (N. J.), Morse, Donnell.

House—Lesinski (chm.), Barden,

Kelley, Powell, Wood, Kennedy, Lucas, Bailey, Irving, Perkins, Howell, Sims, Jacobs, Burke, Streed, Wier, McConnell, Gwinn, Brehm, Smith (Kans.), Kearns, Nixon, Morton, Werdel, Velde.

Expenditures in the Executive Departments

Senate—McClellan (chm.), Eastland, Hoey, Taylor, O'Connor, Long, Humphrey, McCarthy, Ives, Mundt, Smith (Maine), Schoeppel, Vandenberg.

House—Dawson (chm.), Holifield, Lanham, Hardy, Karsten, McCormack, Bonner, Sadowski, Huber, Blatnik, Donohye, Wagner, Doffey, Bolton (Md.), Burnside, Bolling, Tauriello, Hoffman, Rich, Reihlman, Harvey, Halleck, Lovre, Pfeiffer.

(Names of Republican members in italics.)

The carry-over members of these committees, in the main, are friendly and sympathetic toward the valid claims and equitable interests of the Federal employees. The histories, interests, and election circumstances of most of the newly elected members create the probability that they, too, will be friendly and sympathetic. The conditions which in the 80th Congress retarded or obstructed legislation generally conceded to be meritorious will occur more rarely, if at all, in the present Congress. On the other hand, many new members will be reluctant to act only on faith, may be willing to act only on proof, and may demand that the proof be strong and convincing.

There is a noticeable change in the political climate or atmosphere this year, an evident relaxation of tensions and stresses. It will be 22 months before another national election is held. While the drop in liv-

ing costs is slight, nevertheless it is a drop rather than a rise. Housing continues to be inadequate, nevertheless the numbers of families experiencing housing difficulties are smaller rather than higher. Employment is still high, nevertheless good jobs are more eagerly sought than they have been during recent years. The conditions which enable emotion and sentiment to dominate reason and logic are not so evident as they have been. If the Federal employee has a good case he can be reasonably sure that it will receive fair consideration; but if his case is not good, emotional appeals or highly generalized representations may not be so effective as they sometimes have been. But to Federal employees such as those who comprise the OPEDA membership this turn of events is not disturbing.

● **REORGANIZATION:** On Washington's Birthday the Hoover Commission presented to the Congress its report and proposals concerning the future pattern and functions of the Department of Agriculture. Adoption in detail of all the proposed measures would cause drastic changes in the existing administrative structure of the department and its policies and procedures; a major revamping of existing lines and agencies of action that could mean new associations for many of the department's professional employees.

The 30 offices, bureaus, administrations, corporations, and services of which the department is now comprised would be realigned into eight services. Of these, seven would be major agencies of executive and administrative action; viz. Research, Extension, Agricultural Resource Conservation, Commodity Adjustment, Regulatory, Agricultural Credit, and Rural Electrification. The eighth service would centralize, under a Third Assistant Secretary, the staff functions of Finance, Personnel, Management Research, General Counsel, Supply, Publication and Information, and Library.

Congressional acceptance of the commission report in its entirety and full detail seems improbable. Its impingements on established public policy and private interest inevitably will inspire many negative reactions; many differences must be resolved before mutual agreement and acceptance can prevail. Its reduction to a specific program of legislative and executive action would be a tremendous task, possibly requiring years for full accomplishment.

The report will focus attention on existing deficiencies and excesses, on inconsistencies and weaknesses, presented with rather brutal frankness. Action by the administration and the Congress to correct these conditions, where their existence is adequately established, is highly probable. But whether the courses of action finally adopted to those ends are the ones proposed by the commission, or alternative ones devised by or more acceptable to the administration and the Congress is for the future to decide.

It seems self-evident that any changes in the pattern and functions of the Department of Agriculture must be acceptable to the majority of the farmers of the United States; must be viewed by them as offering definite advantages and benefits as compared to the existing order. The acceptability of the commission proposals with reference to agriculture to the one-fifth of the nation directly engaged in agriculture is yet to be determined. It seems evident, though, that the program as it affects the Department of Agriculture will be subject to thorough scrutiny and analysis and will find acceptance only to the degree that it can be justified by positive advantages.

It is conceivable that the report could create a new element of uncertainty in relation to current proposals with respect to the people who comprise the Federal service. Many members of Congress may reason: "Current conditions seem to justify this proposal, but will it be justified if the findings and recommendations of the Hoover Commission are adopted?" One early effect of the report may be the development of an attitude of procrastination in the adoption of current proposals; a tendency to allow matters to rest in abeyance awaiting new eventualities.

● **PAY RAISES:** At this juncture the least conservative of the federal employee organizations are strongly advocating them; the more conservative are not. The least conservative are talking about lump sum increases, with \$650 the favorite figure, although as much as \$1,000 has been suggested; the more conservative are emphasizing a complete revision of the classification structure of which the net result probably would be increases averaging in the neighborhood of \$100. The Hoover commission has stressed the need for appreciable increases in the higher salary brackets but implies that federal salaries for the lower grades, \$3,000 or less, now compare quite favorably with the rates paid by private industry for services of similar character. The President has endorsed substantial advances in the salaries of the top-

flight federal executives but has not expressed approval of general salary increases.

The initial step was a bill to establish new salaries for the secretaries, under-secretaries and assistant secretaries of the executive departments, and the heads, associate heads and assistant heads of certain of the major agencies; the total number of positions involved being 218; the range of salaries being from \$15,000 to \$20,000. Almost immediately, the bill was expanded to include also the President, the Vice President, and the Speaker of the House. On December 13 OPEDA's executive officer testified in favor of this bill before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. However, as enacted, the bill applied only to the salaries of the President, Vice President and Speaker.

The remainder of the bill was then modified to include also pay increases of \$330 for employees of the District of Columbia, who had been excluded from the general pay raise of last June; and increases of similar amount to members of the Foreign Service. The range of salaries for high executives was raised to \$25,000 from \$17,500. Such bills are now under consideration by the Civil Service committees of both Houses. There seems to be no dissent to the \$330 increases to D. C. and Foreign Service employees; but as yet no general acceptance of the proposed range of salaries for the higher executives. It would not be surprising if that were cut back to the previously proposed range of \$15,000 to \$20,000 before the bill is approved.

On January 18 Senators Johnston, Langer, O'Connor, and Baldwin jointly sponsored the bill S-559 which proposes that federal and D. C. employees whose rate of compensation is increased by sections 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 of the Federal Employees Pay Act of 1946 shall receive additional compensation at the rate of \$650 per annum. Policemen and firemen in the District of Columbia would be given \$330 increases. The maximum limit of \$10,000 in the Federal Employees Pay Act of 1945 would be increased to \$10,980. Foreign service salaries not in excess of \$10,000 would be increased by \$650. Three identical bills have been introduced in the House: H.R. 2491 by Rep. McCarthy; H.R. 2495 by Rep. Miller; and H.R. 2578 by Rep. Corbett. H.R. 2522 by Rep. Rhodes would increase all postal and classified employees at the rate of \$650 per annum. Hearings on these bills have not been held to date.

These foregoing bills and others of like import may be quite materially modified before they receive final consideration. The support behind them does not compare in volume and intensity with the support of the pay bills of 1948. The affirmative factors are less acute and the negative factors more impressive than they were a year ago.

● **PER DIEM INCREASES:** Here the prospects for favorable action are encouraging. The impact of increased costs of official travel hits members of Congress with as much force as others; the result is a growing realization that \$6 no longer reimburses

even modest travel expenditure. Sen. McClellan, chairman of the Senate Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments, and Rep. Dawson, chairman of the companion House committee, personally have introduced identical bills (S-352 and H.R. 828) which would authorize per diem rates up to \$10 in the continental United States and empower the Bureau of the Budget to authorize rates, no limit being expressed by the bill, for travel beyond the continental United States. A restudy of these bills, possibly to authorize also auto mileage allowances up to 7 cents per mile, is now said to be in progress. OPEDA has written letters to the chairmen of both committees stressing the inequity of the current \$6 maximum and strongly advocating its increase to \$10 in the U. S. and \$11 elsewhere. But with economic trends what they are, it would not be surprising if the legislation finally enacted establishes an \$8 maximum in the U. S. and a \$9 maximum elsewhere.

● **AUTO MILEAGE RATES:** Notwithstanding the comment above, there is far from general agreement as to the need of an increase in the present 5 cents per mile maximum for the use of privately owned cars in official business. The belief widely prevails that the records of operating cost of the various agencies of the government show average costs to be appreciably lower; especially if depreciation, taxes, insurance, etc., are recognized as basic obligations of individual ownership not affected by partial use of a vehicle for official purposes. It seems evident that more impressive data than those hitherto available will be needed to convincingly establish the need for higher mileage rates.

● **ANNUAL AND SICK LEAVE:** The greatest current activity in this field is to place postal employees on a parity with classified employees. Otherwise, no changes in the leave provisions seem imminent. Proposals to increase the total of accrued annual leave that can be carried over into the succeeding year are not creating much excitement. The graduate school committee suggestion that employees desiring to advance their educational careers be allowed to carry over additional accrued leave exclusively for that purpose, to be matched by grants of special leave by the U. S., has not yet attained the legislative stage.

● **DISABILITY ALLOWANCES:** The outlook for more liberal provision in cases of partial or total disability incurred in the course of official duty is encouraging. Comments as to the utter inadequacy of the current maximum allowance have been contributed by a number of impressive elements. The bill reported by the House Committee on Education and Labor in 1948 was again introduced by Rep. Keating in this Congress as H.R. 46. Later the identical bill was introduced by the present chairman of the committee, Rep. Lesinski, as H.R. 1236, and by Rep. Granahan as H.R. 2647. There are so many sound arguments in support of the bill; so few against it; that its

enactment during the current year seems quite probable.

● EDUCATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS:

The desirability and need of training of promising employees of the government in advanced methods and at federal expense has been emphasized by the Hoover commission and by other important agencies. The eventual establishment of such a policy seems almost inevitable. But a wide diversity of opinion as to principles, procedures and details thus far has obstructed mutuality of agreement on a specific legislative measure and there is not now any major and well supported plan to provide exceptional talent with exceptional opportunity to develop its potentialities in the public interest. It seems evident though that force of circumstances will in time lead to some equitable and practicable program.

● **CLASSIFICATION:** Mark Twain's comment about the weather hitherto has been appropos in this field. There now seems to be almost unanimous agreement that the stresses and strains to which the prevailing classification structure has been subject, demand its early replacement by a new pattern more in accord with reality. The President has said so, the columnists who specialize in federal affairs almost all have said so. But none of the formulae hitherto submitted has been free from serious defects. Current gossip, however, is to the effect that a definite plan of classification revision is now in course of development and will emerge into the bright light of general publicity ere long. The single schedule idea apparently has prevailed over all alternative possibilities; at least it seems to be endorsed by practically all who express views on the subject. The rhetorical bases of classification, the "magic word" influence, seem to have fallen from their high place and now to be derided rather than revered. However, the Hoover commission findings and proposals inject some new elements into the problem and make it difficult to forecast the pattern of classification that eventually will replace the present one.

● **RETIREMENT CREDIT:** This subject now seems to command more interest and attention among OPEDA members than any other. A year ago the OPEDA retirement committee found that out of an estimated 5,512 persons who would be affected by the proposed policy, 4,287 were in the Department of Agriculture. Whether those numbers are maximum remains to be determined. A compilation made by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress 15 months ago showed that there are 34 categories of grants-in-aid to states, and 11 categories of federal expenditures within states, dependent on matching of federal funds, etc.

In essence, the thesis is this: In the federal service today, and eligible for annuity under the Federal Retirement Act, are some thousands of persons who have been under federal appointment for periods of 10 to 25 years, whose retirement annuities based on federal service exclusively will be relatively small, who prior to federal

employment were employed by a state, territory or Puerto Rico exclusively or primarily in programs of work conducted in cooperation with the federal government under authority of federal statutes, under the general direction and control of federal agencies, and with all or parts of the costs of the programs financed by federal funds. Such programs were in furtherance of national interest and welfare, and their cooperative conduct under state supervision rather than their direct accomplishment as federal projects was principally in deference to political principles and traditions rather than to a minority of federal interest or to the inferiority or disqualification of the federal government as the major agency of action.

In these circumstances it has been reasoned that these persons in their earlier status as state employees really were engaged in federal activities as fully as they were later in their status as federal employees, that is, their exclusive or primary function was to carry out certain phases of a national program of action, notwithstanding the fact that the state was the direct agency of execution. That fact supports the premise that in calculating the number of years during which their personal services had been dedicated to the advancement of the interests of the national government it would be equitable to include the years they so served under state appointment as well as those they served under federal appointment.

What inspired, or at least lent strength to this premise is the fact that with respect to certain classes of state employees working under grant-in-aid programs the principle has been recognized by the United States Civil Service Commission; and credit under the Federal Retirement Act has been granted in numerous instances to persons who primarily were state appointees but who also held appointment as collaborators of the federal government in order that they might more effectively carry on the cooperative federal-state programs in which they were engaged.

Where this has happened, the controlling factor has been the condition of dual appointment. In all other respects basic conditions of participation in the federal enterprise were closely similar to those where retirement credit was not allowed. In numerous instances persons shared identical duties, one under federal appointment, the other not. In other numerous instances two lines of endeavor, both federally cooperative in character, were conducted in almost inseparable relation to each other but under two different grant-in-aid acts, where one federal agency of direction followed the practice of granting collaborator appointments while the other did not.

There is no dissent to the allowance of federal retirement credit in the cases where it has been allowed. There is dissent to the refusal of such credit where it has been denied. Differentiation of treatment solely on the basis of the existence or non-existence of a federal appointment, at nominal or no fixed rate of compensation, but where all other conditions

of cooperative federal-state service are substantially identical, is difficult of justification or rationalization. The measure of service to the national interest is as great in the one class of cases as in the other.

These circumstances caused OPEDA to believe that the problem properly came within its field of action. Accordingly, in 1947, it established a retirement committee which since has given the subject a great deal of attention, summing up its findings and conclusions in a report issued in April 1948. Meanwhile, the subject has commanded the interest of many of OPEDA's members as well as of many other persons who are not members.

Among OPEDA members two considerations are paramount. One is to obtain full equity for all federal employees. The other is to avoid any action which might tend to break down the integrity of the Federal Retirement Act. Legislation too loosely drawn or too liberal in its terms might readily have such a result. Loading the retirement system beyond its safe actuarial limits might lend strength to the frequently made suggestion that federal employees be placed under the Social Security system, which might mean the loss of hard-earned benefits and advantages, adverse to the interests of all federal employees.

Numerous conferences, discussions, conversations and other ways of expressing viewpoints finally have developed what seems to be a clear-cut consensus, supportive of the basic idea but contingent on the provision that the proposed legislation shall definitely and specifically safeguard the retirement policy so that no abuses can occur. The safeguards deemed necessary are these:

1. That retirement credit for prior cooperative employment under state appointment shall be allowed only to those persons who were under federal appointment during the five or more years immediately preceding the date of their retirement.

2. The performance of cooperative service under state appointment for which retirement credit is to be claimed shall be certified, in a form prescribed by the U. S. Civil Service Commission, by the head or designated representative of the agency administering the statute under which the service was performed.

3. That the service for which credit is to be claimed was not of a casual or sporadic or intermittent character but was exclusive or primary.

4. That the person claiming credit shall have deposited in the U. S. Treasury to the credit of the Civil Service retirement and disability fund sums equal to those he would have paid during the claimed period of service if during such period he had been a federal appointee subject to the provisions of the retirement act, plus the interest that would have been credited to such payments to date, had they been made.

5. That if the retiree also is or will be recipient of a state annuity based on the same years of service, and if the combined state and federal annuities would exceed 80 per centum of the average salary for the 5 years on which the retirement annuity would be calculated, the fed-

eral contribution should be reduced to the extent necessary to keep the combined annuities within the 80 per centum limitation. This clause was adopted as the preferable alternative to a clause stipulating that the same year of service could not be claimed under both a state and a federal annuity; and also corresponds to the present limitation in the retirement act.

Meanwhile bill drafting had become an important activity. The chief obstacle proved to be the fact that none of the several drafts of bills unmistakably embodied all of the principles set forth above. Certain clauses were based on deduction or inference. Other clauses lacked clarity of intent or limitation. The result was delay and uncertainty; serious disappointment to the many persons who are concerned.

Recently, however, a draft has been devised that is believed to fully and clearly prescribe the 5 safeguards deemed essential, and to obviate any serious possibility that the legislation, if enacted, would be a hazard to the integrity of the retirement program. In other words, rather complete agreement seems now to have been attained.

But that happy stage had not been reached when the council held its meeting on January 18. In consequence the proposal was not then given an unqualified clearance as a major OPEDA objective. Rather it was approved in principle but on the condition that such approval would not become final until the legislation agreed to had been reviewed and approved by the executive committee. The latest version of a bill is believed to contain all of the limitations requisite to the integrity of the retirement program.

Hopes recently have been raised by the determination that two prominent members of the Senate Committee on Post Office and Civil Service view the

bill with such favor that they are willing to become its joint sponsors. For a time it appeared that the bill might be introduced during the first week in February, but certain circumstances arose which caused its potential sponsors to decide to postpone its introduction to a later date but, unless new obstacles arise, the bill in the form now agreed to may be introduced not later than St. Patrick's Day.

● **CONSTITUTION AMENDED:** The OPEDA Council, at its meeting of January 18, 1949, by motion duly seconded and carried, approved an amendment of the OPEDA constitution designed to meet the troublesome cases, of which there have been many, where applicants for membership are rejected because their allocated or unallocated grades are below CAF-7, but where their sponsors or associates assert that they are performing truly professional duties. Article III of the Constitution was amended by adding thereto the following language: "Provided, that any person who actually is performing services of a technical or professional nature of a type at least equivalent to services performed by persons occupying positions in Grades P-1 or SP-6 shall be eligible for membership."

● **REGIONAL CHAPTERS:** The centers of OPEDA membership which currently have the 12 members prescribed by the Constitution as the minimum required for regional chapter status now number 26. Rather regrettably, Spartanburg continues to be the only one which thus far has applied for and received a regional charter. Two or three other centers have manifested some preliminary interest in a chapter status but thus far have not carried the project to full fruition. However, there is one ray of promise. Miss Mildred C. Ben-

ton who during the past two years has been the highly effective chairman of the Committee on Professional Standards and Compensation, and is now an equally effective member of the executive committee, and who as chief of the division of field library service of the departmental library, engages in rather extensive field travel, hopes that as she visits different centers eligible for a chapter status, she can stimulate some informal discussions of the advantages thereof that might lead to affirmative action by the OPEDA members at such centers.

The 26 potential scenes of chapter activity are as follows:

Spartanburg, S.C. (now chartered)	68
Milwaukee, Wis.	62
Albany and Berkeley, Calif.	50
New Orleans, La.	45
Philadelphia, Pa., and environs	45
Lincoln, Neb.	36
Madison, Wis.	34
Albuquerque, N. M.	30
Denver, Colo.	25
Portland, Ore.	22
Columbus, Ohio	20
Ogden, Utah	20
Los Angeles, Calif., and environs	19
Duluth, Minn., and environs	18
Fort Worth, Tex.	18
Missoula, Mont.	18
St. Paul-Minneapolis, Minn.	18
Mayaguez, P. R.	14
Moorestown, N. J.	14
Peoria, Ill.	14
Chicago, Ill.	13
Sioux City, Ia.	13
Atlanta, Ga.	12
Gulfport, Miss.	12
Juneau, Alaska	12
Nogales, Ariz.	12

● **LARGER MEMBERSHIP:** Less than 5 years ago OPEDA tottered on the brink of the grave. The confusions and disruptions of war had so affected its previous membership, and its administration, that mid-1944 dis-

ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Washington 25, D. C.

Application hereby is made for membership in the Organization of Professional Employees of the United States Department of Agriculture; the annual dues of which are \$2 per year, and for which there is no initiation or membership fee.

Name _____ Bureau _____
 (First name in full: Mr., Mrs., Miss., Dr.)
 Div. or Branch _____
 Address _____ Title _____
 Classification (as CAF-7, P-1, SP-6) _____

(If employed in Washington or Beltsville, give office address only)

Enclosed is check (—), currency (—), money order (—) for \$2 for 1949 dues. (Checks or money orders may be made payable to Org. Prof. Employees USDA or simply to O.P.E.D.A.)

Date _____ 1949 _____
 (Signature of applicant)

closed a paid-up membership of only 432. Its present state of health is remarkable evidence of the tenacity, tact, energy, patience, enthusiasm and devotion of Dr. Carleton R. Ball, Damon A. Spencer, and Dr. Melvin C. Merrill, who as presidents of OPEDA refused to be daunted or discouraged, and who never allowed their faith in OPEDA to flag or waver. They set high marks for their successors in the presidency.

Today OPEDA has 2,800 members, who include a half-dozen heads of bureaus, an even larger number of associates and assistant heads, many of the men eminent in the striking scientific accomplishment of the department, and many of the men and women whose hands and minds will guide the department's future destinies. OPEDA's unobligated bank account currently is large enough to finance its activities through 1949 on a scale equalling if not surpassing 1948. Its membership lists are live and current; its addressograph mailing lists likewise are complete and up-to-date; its methods, procedures and programs are developing in ways that will make it increasingly effective. Its future prospects can be bright.

But no grounds currently exist for complacency or smug satisfaction. OPEDA is still far short of its reasonable potentialities for service mutually beneficial to its members and to the Department of Agriculture. One regrettable fact is that thus far it has been able to interest as members scarcely more than one-tenth of the USDA employees who are eligible to its membership. That fact is a serious derogation to its hopes and ambitions. It poses a serious question as to why only one professional member out of 10 in the department finds in it a persuasive appeal to his or her professional interests and aspirations. The

situation calls for frank and honest analysis.

OPEDA has not been, is not, and will not be a pressure group motivated solely by selfish interest and purpose. Naturally, it is concerned with the individual interests of its members; but it is equally concerned with the best interests of the department, the bureaus and agencies comprising the department; and the best general interests of the nation. It is concerned not alone with pay for service but also with service for pay. It prefers to attain its objectives with facts and reason and logic, based on sound technical knowledge, wide experience and superior judgment, rather than on political appeals, non-cooperation or coercion.

One might reasonably assume that OPEDA could give to at least one-third of the professional employees of the USDA the values commensurate with the costs and obligations of membership. That would mean a membership of around 8,000; an annual income of around \$16,000. With such a membership and income OPEDA could be a potent force in the promotion of the interests of its members and those of the department and the nation.

A review of OPEDA's earlier files discloses some interesting reactions on the part of eligible USDA members. Numerous professional members of USDA apparently feel that OPEDA would be a pressure group to force compensations and concessions inequitable to the American people; and in principle they are opposed to any organization so motivated. Conversely, others seem to entertain the idea that OPEDA does not go far enough in promoting and protecting individual interests and equities; to them the materialistic policies of more aggressive labor organiza-

tions seem more appropriate than the abstract concepts of mutual government-employee relationships which are the bases of OPEDA policy.

Still others take the pessimistic view that professional minorities can accomplish relatively little through organizational means and that efforts to do so are futile and wasted. Finally, there are the individualists, the free lances, who prefer to be on their own; more confident of their personal powers to safeguard their interests than of the ability of any organization to do so.

But it seems improbable that all of these categories combined can amount to more than two-thirds of the USDA professional employees. A more reasonable assumption is that for perhaps 8,000 of the USDA professional employees OPEDA should have a real appeal and capacity for service. How to inspire their realization of that fact is one of OPEDA's present problems. Perhaps the solution is a greater proselyting effort by those who are now members of OPEDA and who believe in it.

To facilitate that solution there is printed on page 7 a blank form of application for membership in OPEDA, which can be sheared from this issue without appreciable impairment of its informational value. If one-third of the recipients of this issue would clip out that form and induce one of their associates or friends to fill it out and mail it together with the modest dues of \$2, which represents the entire cost of annual membership, OPEDA's membership would at once jump to more than 3,600. If you believe in OPEDA and desire it to grow into the force for good which it is capable of becoming, will you not clip out the application blank and promote its execution and transmission at an early date.

Miss Bella E. Shachtman
Library

C-12

CSR